

Amendments to the Specification:

Please amend the paragraph which begins on page 1, lines 20-21, as follows:

--This invention relates generally to tile and masonry installation, and specifically to a method and framework for installing tiles.--

Please amend the paragraph that begins on page 3, line 3 through line 10 as follows:

--As already introduced in the incorporated reference, the present invention is a method for installing tiles in floating manner above the floor. ~~An alternative~~ The method ~~has been invented the~~ comprises ~~provision of~~ providing a support within the footprint of and proximate to the outer perimeter of a tile. A first border is provided along one edge of the tile and a second border is provide along the second edge of the tile wherein the two edges are substantially orthogonal to each other. The present method is further distinguished by the provision of maintaining the first border in place relative to the second border.--

Please amend the paragraph that begins on page 3, line 12 through page 3, line 18 as follows.

--In order to maintain the position of the first border relative to the second border, one alternative method provides for connecting a first end of the first border to a ~~cross-tie~~ cross-tie. Then, a second border is orthogonally connected to the ~~cross-tie~~

cross-tie. According to ~~alternative~~ the method, the first border is maintained in position relative to the second border by mating a first connector of a first type that is associated with the first border to second connector of a second type that associated with the second border.--

Please amend the paragraph that begins on page 3, line 20 through page 3, line 23 as follows:

--In order to provide a generally pleasing ~~aseetic~~ aesthetic appearance, a ~~faeia~~ fascia is provided between the first border and the second border. According to ~~one example~~ an exemplary method, the ~~faeia~~ fascia is provided by extending the first border to a tapered transition line and also extending the second border to the same tapered transition line.--

Please amend the paragraph that begins on page 3, line 25 through page 4, line 7 as follows:

--The present invention also comprises a tile installation ~~picture~~ fixture comprising a support rail, a border and a first connector substantially at one end of the support rail. According to one alternative embodiment, the first connector comprises a connector that is compatible with a ~~eross-tie~~ cross-tie. According to one alternative embodiment of the present invention, the border extends beyond the support rail. According to yet another example ~~might~~, this extension of the border continues to an imaginary tapered extension line that extends outward and away from the end of the support rail. The support rail itself, according to ~~one example embodied~~ an exemplary

embodiment comprises a ledge that runs along the border and that is lower in elevation than the border. ~~According to yet another example might,~~ The installation fixture border comprises a raised surface that runs along the support rail.--

Please amend the paragraph that begins on page 4, line 9 through page 4, line 16 as follows:

--According to an alternative example exemplary embodiment of the invention, the first connector comprises a right-angle connector of a first type. According to yet another ~~example~~ exemplary embodiment, the tile installation fixture further comprises a second right-hand angle connector of a second type. This second type connector is complementary to the first type so as to enable the two connectors to mate. When so mated, the support rail and border of a first tile installation fixture is set substantially orthogonal to the support rail and border of a second tile installation fixture.--

Please amend the paragraph that begins on page 5, line 6 through page 5, line 7 as follows:

--Fig. 1 is a flow diagram that depicts ~~one example~~ an exemplary method for installing a floor tile according to the present invention;--

Please amend the paragraph that begins on page 5, line 10 through page 5, line 12 as follows:

--Fig. 2 is a flow diagram that depicts ~~one example~~ an exemplary method for maintaining the position of a second border relative to a first border according to the present invention;--

Please amend the paragraph that begins on page 5, line 18 through page 5, line 20 as follows:

--Figs. 4 and 5 are a top view and a perspective view, respectively, of a tile installation fixture that implements one alternative method of the present invention for connecting borders orthogonal to each other by means of a ~~cross-tie~~ cross-tie;--

Please amend the paragraph that begins on page 5, line 22 through page 5, line 24 as follows:

--Fig. 6 is a pictorial representation that depicts a connection of a first border and a second border as facilitated by the use of a ~~cross-tie~~ cross-tie according to the present invention;--

Please add the following paragraph to page 6, beginning on line 6:

--Fig. 9 is a perspective view depicting the direct attachment of a first border to a second border by means of complementary connectors.--

Please amend the paragraph that begins on page 7, line 4 through page 7, line 16 as follows:

--Fig. 1 is a flow diagram that depicts ~~one example~~ an exemplary method for installing a floor tile according to the present invention. ~~According to this example method, the~~ A tile support is provided (step 5). ~~The tile support is provided~~ within the footprint of the tile is generally proximate to the outer perimeter of the tile. Once the support has been provided, a first border is provided along a first edge of the tile (step 10). Generally, the border is collinear to the support. Once the first border is provided, a second border is provided along a second edge of the tile. This second edge of the tile is substantially orthogonal to the first edge. However, the tile need not be rectangular. Hence, additional variations of this method may provide a second border at some other angle relative to the first border. In order to ensure a secure installation of the tile, one example of alternative method of the present invention provides for maintaining the position of the first border relative to the position of the second border (step 20).--

Please amend the paragraph that begins on page 7, line 18 through page 7, line 24 as follows:

--Fig. 2 is a flow diagram that depicts ~~one example~~ an exemplary method for maintaining the position of a second border relative to a first border according to the present invention. According to one alternative method, maintaining the position of the first border relative to the second border is accomplished by connecting a first end of the first border to a ~~cross-tie~~ cross-tie (step 25). A first end of the second border is also

attached to the ~~cross-tie~~ cross-tie (step 30). Typically, the second border is attached to the ~~cross-tie~~ cross-tie in a manner that renders it orthogonal to the first border.--

Please amend the paragraph that begins on page 7, line 26 through page 8, line 7 as follows:

--Fig. 3 is a flow diagram that depicts one alternative method for maintaining the position of a second border relative to a first border according to the present invention. According to one alternative method, a first ~~and~~ end of the first border is directly attached to a first end of the second border. And according to yet another alternative method, this is accomplished by providing a first connector at a the first end of the first border (step 35) and a second connector at the first end of the second border (step 40) wherein the first connector provided on the first border is complementary to the second connector provided on the second border. The two connectors are then connected (step 45) resulting in securing the position of the second border relative to the first border, typically in orthogonal manner.--

Please amend the paragraph that begins on page 8, line 9 through page 8, line 19 as follows:

--According to one alternative method of the present invention, a facia is provided between the first border and the second border. According to ~~one example~~ an exemplary method, the facia is provided by extending the first border to taper transition line content extending the second border to the same taper transition line. ~~What I~~

According to another ~~example~~ exemplary method of the present invention, providing a support within the footprint of the tile comprises providing a ledge along the first border. According to yet another variation of the present method, providing a border along the tile comprises providing a raised surface along the support ledge. The reader is encouraged to review the Incorporated reference for further clarification on this ~~example~~ exemplary method of providing either a ledge and/or a border along an edge of a tile.--

Please amend the paragraph that begins on page 8, line 21 through page 9, line 4 as follows:

--Figs. 4 and 5 are a top view and a perspective view of a tile installation fixture that implements one alternative method of the present invention for connecting borders orthogonal to each other by means of a ~~cross-tie~~ cross-tie. According to this ~~example~~ exemplary embodiment, a tile installation fixture comprises a support rail 60 and a border 65 disposed collinearly to the support rail 60. The tile installation fixture further comprises a connector 80 at one end. According to ~~one example~~ an exemplary embodiment, ~~the~~ connector 80 is compatible with a ~~cross-tie~~ cross-tie. It should be noted that, according to one alternative embodiment ~~of the tile insulation picture~~, the support rail 60 comprises a ledge 61 that runs along ~~the~~ border 65 wherein ~~this~~ ledge 61 is lower in elevation than ~~the~~ border 65. According to yet another alternative embodiment, ~~the~~ border 65 comprises a raised surface that runs along ~~the~~ support rail 60.--

Please amend the paragraph that begins on page 9, line 6 through page 9, line 12 as follows:

--According to yet another ~~example~~ exemplary embodiment of ~~that illustrates~~ the present invention, ~~the~~ border 65 is extended 85 outward beyond the support rail 60, as generally shown by extensions 85 in Fig. 5. ~~According to yet another example embodiment, this~~ Eextension 85 continues to an imaginary tapered extension line 90. This same treatment, including the connector and border extension, may be provided on both ends of the tile installation fixture according to yet another alternative embodiment of the invention.--

Please amend the paragraph that begins on page 9, line 14 through page 9, line 27 as follows:

--Fig. 6 is a pictorial representation that depicts a connection of a first border and a second border as facilitated by the use of a ~~cross-tie~~ cross-tie according to the present invention. According to one illustrated use case, a first tile installation fixture 120 is connected to a cross tie 100 by means of a connector 80 comprising one end of the first tile installation fixture 120. A second tile installation fixture 130, also including a connector 80 at one end, is connected to the same ~~cross-tie~~ cross-tie 100. The ~~cross-tie~~ cross-tie 100, according to ~~one example~~ an exemplary embodiment, comprises a plurality of tile ~~insulation-picture~~ installation fixture connectors. According to this ~~example~~ embodiment, at least two such connectors (105 and 110) comprise ~~the cross-tie~~ cross-tie 100. These connectors, ~~which according to one~~

- Application No. 10/612,558
Amendment dated December 22, 2004
Reply to Office Action of 09/22/04
- Attorney Docket No. 03-12746

~~illustrated embodiment~~, comprise tongue and groove connectors that are complementary to tongue and groove connectors 80 comprising the tile installation fixtures. Note, that according to this ~~example~~ embodiment, the facia 150 provided between the two borders comprises extensions of these two borders to an imaginary tapered line 90.--

Please amend the paragraph that begins on page 10, line 1 through page 10, line 11 as follows:

--Fig. 7 is a perspective diagram that depicts the underside of one alternative embodiment of a tile installation fixture comprising a first connector type according to the teachings of the present method. According to this ~~example~~ embodiment, a tile installation fixture 170 comprises a first connector type. According to this ~~example~~ embodiment, the first connector type comprises a receptacle 175 having an opening oriented downward relative to the installation position of ~~the tile insulation picture~~ installation fixture 170. According to this ~~example~~ embodiment, the receptacle 175 comprises a triangular shaped opening that is capable of accepting at least one prong. Generally, this prong comprises a second and complementary connector type comprising yet another embodiment of the tile installation fixture.--

Please amend the paragraph that begins on page 10, line 13 through page 10, line 19 as follows:

--Fig. 8 is a perspective diagram that depicts the direct connection of a first tile installation fixture to a second tile installation fixture according to the teachings of the

present invention. According to ~~one example~~ an exemplary embodiment of the present invention, a first end of a second tile installation fixture 180 comprises a second connector type. According to this ~~example~~ embodiment, the second connector type comprises a prong 190 that is compatible with the receptacle 175 of comprising a first tile installation fixture 170.--

Please amend the paragraph that begins on page 10, line 21 through page 11, line 3 as follows:

--Fig. 9 is a perspective diagram that depicts the direct attachment of a first border to a second border by means of ~~complimentary~~ complementary connectors comprising each of said borders. According to this illustrative use case, a first tile installation fixture 170 is directly attached to a second tile installation fixture 180. The first tile installation fixture includes a first connector type, for example a receptacle 175 (not specifically visible in this figure) and the second tile installation fixture 180 comprises a second connector type that is ~~complimentary~~ complementary to the first connector type. According to ~~one example~~ an exemplary embodiment, the second connector type comprises a prong 190. As the two tile installation fixtures are connected to each other, extensions to their respective borders 150 form a ~~faeia~~ fascia between the two borders.--